



CITY OF ROANOKE OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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December 19, 2005

Honorable C. Nelson Harris, Mayor
Honorable Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., Vice Mayor
Honorable M. Rupert Cutler, Council Member
Honorable Alfred T. Dowe, Jr., Council Member
Honorable Sherman P. Lea, Council Member
Honorable Brenda McDaniel, Council Member
Honorable Brian J. Wishneff, Council Member

Subject: Parking Ordinances

Dear Mayor Harris and Members of Council:

Background:

During 2001, the Police Department began the process of investigating new technologies that would increase the availability of downtown on street parking as well as increase the efficiency of parking enforcement fine collection efforts. Recently, computer automation and hand held ticket issuance devices have been deployed. The technology associated with these units enables the Police, and Billings and Collections to implement new initiatives and re-engineer outdated business processes.

The city administration has had several meetings with Downtown Roanoke, Inc. concerning parking in the downtown area. The administration has also reviewed parking regulations from around the commonwealth. Review of these parking regulations, examination of the city's internal data and consultation with Downtown Roanoke Inc. revealed that customer service and business practice efficiency could be improved in four areas.

In an effort to enhance the downtown shopping experience, first time parking violators should be given a warning ticket instead of a fine. Many of these first time violators are out of town visitors shopping in our downtown. This proposed change is supported by Downtown Roanoke, Inc.

Parking violators who receive more than one ticket on the same calendar day should be subject to an escalation of fines. The first violation would result in a fifteen dollar (\$15.00) fine. The second violation on the same calendar day

would result in a thirty dollar (\$30.00) fine. The third violation on the same calendar day would result in a forty-five dollar (\$45.00) fine.

Parking violators who refuse to pay their fines should be subject to a vehicle immobilization program which will hold their vehicle until all fines are paid. This vehicle immobilization program should be administered through our police department.

Finally, the court system should be used only as a remedy for redress concerning disputes over issued violations and not as a collection agent for unpaid fines. The city would have the option of sending a law enforcement notice to the violator to begin the court process or to utilize other collection methods including utilizing the vehicle immobilization program.

Updating the City parking statutes to address these four areas will enhance the ability of the Police Department to open up on street parking spaces and reduce excessive parking violations. Code modification allowing warning tickets will provide for a more welcoming atmosphere in the downtown area for first time visitors and out of town guests. The proposed changes will also increase the efficiency of the Department of Billings and Collections when properly cited violators fail or refuse to, complete required payments. The impact on revenues should be minimal.

This Ordinance shall become effective February 1, 2006.

Recommended Action:

Amend and re-ordain the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, by revising code section 20-89 "Penalties for unlawful parking" and adding new code section 20-90 "Immobilization of motor vehicles against which there are outstanding parking violations".

The recommended revisions strengthen the ability of the City to provide efficient and empathetic service to all downtown parking violators as well as those persons seeking short term on street parking.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darlene L. Burcham".

Darlene L. Burcham
City Manager

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c: Mary F. Parker, City Clerk
William M. Hackworth, City Attorney
Jesse A. Hall, Director of Finance
Rolanda B. Russell, ACM for Community Development
A. L. Gaskins, Chief of Police

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